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RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 0362
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0279
RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 1360
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 0557
RUEHBM/AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST PRIORITY 2376
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY 0472
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 0321
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0596
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY 0159
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RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY 4047
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 USNATO 000330

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SUBJECT: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL READOUT MAY 24, 2007

Classified By: DCM Richard G. Olson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY:

-- Afghanistan: Deputy Chairman of the Military Committee (D/CMC) noted SACEUR's letter to PermReps regarding the start of Operation Adalat. The D/CMC also highlighted recent offers of additional Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs), but stressed that these offers are not sufficient to address long-term training needs. The SYG underscored the significant long-term shortfall in OMLTs and pressed Allies to do more. Germany, Italy, Denmark and Netherlands detailed recent high-level national visits to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

-- Afghanistan) Strategic Communications: NATO Spokesman Appathurai briefed on strategic communications in Afghanistan, focusing on critical areas in which NATO and Allies needed to improve: nurturing the Afghan National Communications Coordination Center (NC3), providing more trained Public Information Officers (PIOs), and getting ISAF a dedicated capability to gather and uplink video. Appathurai urged Allies to devote more resources to move NATO communications abilities into the 21st century.

-- Kosovo: The Secretary General (SYG) noted his discussion with President Bush at Crawford, where he urged maintaining diplomatic momentum to reach a conclusion on the UNSCR soon.

-- Iraq: SG on gendarmerie training to go to Senior Resource Board on May 25 for consideration on financial aspects. D/CMC noted need for NAC approval by early June to enable a September mission start date.

-- Response to Terrorism: The SYG strongly condemned the

terrorist attack in Ankara, expressed solidarity with Turkey, and said that NATO will continue to fight terrorism in all its forms.

-- Crisis Management Exercise 2008, (CMX-08): Lack of agreement on security provision hinders issuance of CMX-08 invitations to international organizations. SYG will raise the issue in a coffee/lunch the week of May 29.

Note: The May 24 NAC began with an exchange of views with Albanian Prime Minister Berisha, Foreign Minister Basha, and Defense Minister Mediu on progress in the context of Albania's Membership Action Plan (MAP). Reporting on this session to follow septel. End note.

END SUMMARY.

Afghanistan

12. (C) D/CMC LTG Eikenberry, in his operations briefing, noted the Taliban was attempting to overcome the death of Mullah Dadullah-Lang by increasing its operational tempo. Dadullah-Lang's death appears to have demoralized mid and low-level Taliban fighters. It is unlikely the Taliban will be able to replace Dadullah in the short term. Eikenberry said the recent incident involving ISAF soldiers along the border between Paktia Province and Kurram Agency, Pakistan, is still under investigation, and will be discussed at the May 26 Tripartite meeting in Kabul. He noted the SACEUR letter to PermReps regarding the start of Operation Adalat in northern Kandahar province.

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13. (C) The D/CMC noted recent offers of Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) from Canada and Poland, and said that two (unnamed) nations are likely to offer OMLTs at the 12 June Force Generation conference. (Note: The Romanians have informed us separately that they are in discussions with SHAPE and hope to be able to announce an OMLT contribution by the June Defense Ministerial. End note.) The D/CMC provided the following figures: current NATO requirement for OMLTs is 46, but will grow to a projected requirement of 103. At present, there are 21 OMLTs and recent offers will bring this number to 30, leaving a near-term shortfall of 16 and a long-term deficit of 73 OMLTs. The General stated, "The announced potential offers are very welcome and will help, but do not solve the problem." The SYG, in unusually sharp remarks, echoed the D/CMC's comments and urged Allies to be more ambitious in filling OMLTs.

14. (C) Several PermReps provided readouts on recent high-level visits to Afghanistan. The German PermRep noted Foreign Minister (FM) Steinmeier had traveled to Afghanistan and Pakistan in preparation for the G-8 Foreign Ministers meeting in Potsdam on May 30. As G-8 President, Germany has launched an initiative on Afghanistan-Pakistan cooperation, and both countries, Foreign Ministers have accepted invitations to attend the Potsdam meeting. Italy's PermRep reported on FM D'Alema's visit to Afghanistan and announced Italy's commitment of 60 million euros for improvements to the Bamiyan-Kabul road. The Danish PermRep shared highlights of his Prime Minister's visit to Kabul and Lashkar Gah, and the Netherlands, PermRep reported on the visit to Afghanistan of the Crown Prince.

15. (C) The SYG said that SACEUR will address the issues of civilian casualties and ISAF-OEF procedure coordination during the NAC Day at SHAPE on June 4.

Afghanistan) Strategic Communications

16. (C) NATO Spokesman James Appathurai briefed the NAC on strategic communications in Afghanistan. After a review of the current situation, Appathurai focused on the critical

areas in which NATO and Allies need to improve. First, NATO needs to nurture the Afghan National Communications Coordination Center (NC3) and expand its reach to more parts of the country. Second, Allies need to enhance ISAF and NATO capabilities by providing more trained PIOs and getting ISAF a dedicated capability to gather and uplink video. Noting that the 26 modern democracies that make up NATO are often trumped on communications technology by a group of Taliban cave-dwellers, he urged Allies to devote more resources to moving NATO from the 1950,s into the 21st century. Appathurai touched on the issue of civilian casualties, stating that while there was no way to &spin8 this negative story, the Alliance could put in place a policy for assisting victims, families that would at least mitigate the damage of these events on public opinion.

¶7. (C) The Spanish PermRep stressed that NATO cannot simply separate message from substance, adding that financial assistance to the families of civilian casualties would be seen as patronizing by the Spanish public. He also pointed out the need to improve synergy between NATO, ISAF, OEF, and the Afghan government. His comments were supported by the French, German, and Italian PermReps, although the Bulgarian PermRep said that NATO needed to &walk on two legs8 by managing both substance and presentation at the same time.

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The UK PermRep dismissed the &message from substance8 debate and urged Allies to agree on a short list of tools) video imagery, a permanent Media Operations Center, and more Afghan interlocutors) so that they could focus quickly on how to resource these capabilities.

¶8. (C) Ambassador Nuland stressed the importance of the issue, emphasizing that it was a major topic of discussion during the meeting between President Bush and the SYG in Crawford this week. She said that the Taliban were crushing NATO on the communications battlefield because they were getting their version of events out first. She laid out the concept of an Afghan military spokesman out front, with a stronger ISAF (non-U.S. or UK) spokesman. She added that an OEF spokesperson would be in the lead when an operation was OEF-led. She agreed that NATO,s press operation was outdated and said the U.S. was willing to offer the resources of its Digital Video Imagery Distribution System (DVIDS) capability as soon as possible. She supported making the Media Operations Center a permanent fixture and stressed that Headquarters needed to do more regular press conferences to amplify) the same day - what was coming out of Kabul. Finally, she pointed to NATO,s bloated publications budget (\$1.6 million annually) as a place from where money could be reprioritized for new media.

Balkans

¶9. (C) Kosovo: The SYG noted that deliberations on the Kosovo UNSCR were continuing, but that the Russian position was difficult. He said he had discussed the issue with President Bush at Crawford, underscoring the importance of maintaining momentum in the diplomatic process and reaching a positive outcome soon. The SYG noted that parties in the region seemed to be managing expectations; for example, Prime Minister Ceku was cautioning that delays in a decision could be possible.

Iraq

¶10. (SBU) SG(2007)0345 on the Gendarmerie training program passed silence this afternoon and the Senior Resource Board will meet on May 25 to consider its advice on the plan, as outlined in the SG. The D/CMC emphasized that the NAC must approve the plan by early June to facilitate the planned for September start date.

Terrorism

¶11. (U) The SYG said he was saddened and appalled by the terrorist attack in Ankara. He expressed condolences and solidarity with Turkey, saying that NATO strongly condemns the attack and will continue to fight terrorism &in all its manifestations,8 as conveyed in his official statement on May 23. The Turkish Deputy PermRep expressed appreciation for the statement and shared Turkey,s initial impressions of the attack: six people had been killed, including one Pakistani, and approximately 100 were injured; the attack was carried out by a suicide bomber with C-4 type explosives; and the bomber had a previous conviction for the mob beating and lynching of a policeman.

Political Subjects

¶12. (C) Ambassador Nuland briefed on developments in the UNSC. She noted the draft UNSCR on Kosovo is being debated and that efforts are being made to accelerate the process.

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The five permanent members of the Council will meet on the draft resolution May 25, and hope to engage Russia on the text. Separately, the UNSC is working on a resolution to establish the Hariri Tribunal and hopes to conclude deliberations this week.

AOB

¶13. (C) CMX-08: The SYG regretted the lack of agreement in the SPC-R on a CMX-08 invitation letter to international organizations, due to an objection regarding language on security arrangements. The SYG will raise the issue at a coffee or lunch the week of May 29. He urged that nations be prepared to provide answers on wording at that time, and that they show flexibility to resolve the issue.

NULAND